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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
13 August 1954

TO: Deputy Director (Intelligence)

SUBJECT: Comment on 12 August Soviet Note to Austria

The Soviet note of 12 August approves the Austrian proposal for the establishment in Vienna of a committee of the four occupying powers and Austria, but proposes that its purpose be the consideration of outstanding issues related to a state treaty, rather than, as Austria had suggested, discussion of "easing the existing situation in Austria."

This note is consistent with the position Moscow has taken in diplomatic statements and propaganda since the Berlin conference that the USSR is prepared to resume treaty talks on the basis of Molotov's proposals at Berlin. It makes no reference, however, to the terms of a treaty. There is no reason to believe that Moscow has retreated from its demands for an Austrian commitment to neutrality and indefinite occupation after conclusion of the treaty.

The note indicates that the Soviet Union is unwilling to be put under pressure in a special committee to alleviate its occupation policies, and prefers to escape this chore by posing as the champion of a state treaty. Recent Soviet propaganda has stated that establishment of the Molotov European security plan would facilitate a state treaty.

The Austrian government is not likely to favor rejection of the Soviet offer since it believes it must make every effort to end the occupation, and the Soviet proposal offers it a chance, which it has not previously had, to participate in treaty negotiations. At the Berlin conference, the Austrian representatives were given an opportunity only to state their case and not participate in discussions. Nevertheless, this Soviet proposal will be a disappointment to Vienna, which has no confidence in the willingness of Moscow to grant a treaty on reasonable terms, and has hope of practical results only in a "little conference" to alleviate occupation burdens, such as Vienna proposed on 22 July.

State Dept. review completed

HUNTINGTON D. SHELDON
Assistant Director
Current Intelligence

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